

Message Text

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21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3654

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

USCINCEUR

USMISSION NATO

USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 7985

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SH, VIP (PRINCE JUAN CARLOS)

SUBJ: PRINCE'S ACTIONS POPULAR BUT EXTREME RIGHT IS ACTIVE

REF: MADRID 7781

SUMMARY: JUAN CARLOS RIDES THE CREST OF FAVORABLE MEDIA
COMMENTARY AND IS GIVEN CREDIT FOR IMMEDIATE DEFUSING OF SAHARAN
CRISIS. UNDER THE PRINCE'S CHAIRMANSHP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
ADOPTED A MEASURE DESIGNED TO USE POLITICAL MEANS FOR DEFUSING
BASQUE SITUATION AND HE HAS CHAIRED SECOND NATIONAL DEFENSE
COUNCIL MEETING INDICATING THAT HE WILL STAY CLOSE TO MILITARY.
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HIS FIRST 10 DAYS AS HEAD OF STATE HAVE BEEN

ACCOMPANIED BY A MARKED RECOVERY IN LOCAL STOCK MARKETS, GENERALLY REFLECTING NEW CONFIDENCE BY INVESTORS IN POSSIBILITY OF SMOOTH TRANSITION. ON THE OTHER HAND, HEAVY-HANDED GOVT TREATMENT OF THE PRESS, RIGHT-WING VIOLENCE, AND THE CONTINUED FINING OF PRIESTS FOR UNACCEPTABLE HOMILIES INDICATE THAT REGIME STRUCTURES STILL MARCH TO THE TUNE OF AN ANCIENT DRUMMER. END SUMMARY

1. LOCAL MEDIA HAVE GIVEN PRINCE JUAN CARLOS GREAT CREDIT FOR CONTRIBUTING BY HIS VISIT TO SAHARA TO THE DEFUSING OF THE CRISIS CAUSED BY THE GREEN MARCH. FOLLOWING RETURN OF MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY CARRO FROM MOROCCO VISIT NOV 7-8, PRINCE CHAIRED NOV 10 HIS SECOND MEETING OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL AT HIS PALACE. HE IS SETTING IMPORTANT PRECEDENT BY CHAIRING THESE MEETINGS WHICH AFFORDS HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO STAY IN CLOSEST TOUCH WITH TOP-MOST MILITARY LEADERS.

2. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING NOV 11, AGAIN HELD AT PRINCE'S PALACE, ADOPTED DECREE SETTING UP A STUDY COMMISSION IN THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION TO PREPARE A SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATUTE TO BE APPLIED TO THE BASQUE PROVINCES OF VIZCAYA AND GUIPUZCOA. ALTHOUGH THE INITIATIVE FOR THIS DECREE GOES BACK TO INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS HELD BY THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR WITH DEPUTIES FROM THE TWO PROVINCES OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THE PRINCE IS THE BENEFICIARY OF MUCH OF THE PRESS DISCUSSION OF THE MEASURE. MOST IMPORTANTLY, IT SHOWS THAT THE GOVT IS THINKING OF POLITICAL MEASURES TO COPE WITH BASQUE PROBLEM RATHER THAN STRICTLY REPRESSIVE MEASURES. NEWSPAPERS ALSO REPORT THAT THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE WILL SHORTLY PUBLISH, OVER THE PRINCE'S SIGNATURE, THE DEFINITIVE DECREE, FIRST APPROVED MAY 31, 1975, AUTHORIZING THE TEACHING OF REGIONAL LANGUAGES DURING THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR AND THEIR USE IN LOCAL GOVT ACTIVITIES. BY THESE ACTIONS THE PRINCE SIGNALS HIS RESPONSIVENESS TO THE ASPIRATIONS OF MODERATE BASQUES AND CATALANS.

3. DURING THE PAST WEEK THE PRINCE ALSO MET WITH CARDINAL
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TARANCON (PRIMATE OF SPAIN), THE CARDINAL OF TOLEDO, AND WITH THE CONTROVERSIAL BISHOP ANOVEROS OF BILBAO. THE CHURCH CAN BE INFLUENTIAL IN THE DEFUSING OF THE BASQUE SITUATION.

4. THE SPANISH STOCK MARKETS IN MADRID, BARCELONA, AND BILBAO REACHED THEIR LOWEST POINT IN 1975 ABOUT THE TIME THAT FRANCO FELL ILL. IN THE BRIEF SPACE OF THE PRINCE'S

TAKING OVER AS HEAD OF STATE, THERE HAVE BEEN STEADY GAINS
IN THE MARKET.

5. THE PRINCE HAS MADE AN AUSPICIOUS START, BUT THERE
ARE OTHER INDICATORS WHICH REVEAL THE TYPE OF PROBLEMS HE
FACES FROM THE RIGHT. IN RECENT WEEKS THERE HAS BEEN AN
UPSURGE IN THE NUMBER OF CONFISCATIONS AND CENSORSHIP OF
PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS INCLUDING THE INDICTMENT OF THE
PUBLISHER OF THE PRESTIGIOUS CATHOLIC INDEPENDENT NEWS-
PAPER "YA" FOR ATTEMPTING TO PUBLISH A HARMLESS ARTICLE
BY THE MODERATE "TACITO" GROUP (MADRID 7900). THERE HAS
BEEN AN UPSURGE OF RIGHT-WING VIOLENCE IN THE PAST FEW
WEEKS (MADRID 7834 AND 7843). THE GOVT HAS BANNED
CONFERENCES BY PRESTIGIOUS PROFESSORS AND EVEN A FORMER
MINISTER (RUIZ GIMENEZ). SIX PRIESTS WERE FINED IN GRANADA
FOR THEIR HOMILIES WITHOUT ANY PRIOR COURT PROCEEDINGS OR
CLEARANCE WITH THE CHURCH HIERARCHY. AMCONGEN
BARCELONA HAS REPORTED A SERIES OF UNPLEASANT INTIMIDATIONS
IN THE CATALAN AREA BY RIGHT-WING THUGS.

6. FRANCO'S HANGING ON TO LIFE HAS IMPEDED THE PRINCE'S
ABILITY TO ALTER THE INGRAINED PRACTICES OF A REGIME AND
ITS MOST EXTREME ADHERENTS. AND THE RIGHT HAS EXPLOITED THE
INTERREGNUM TO WARN SPANIARDS OF THE DANGERS OF CHANGE,
E.G., THE POLITICAL RALLY IN ZARAGOZA NOV 10 OF BLAS PINAR'S
"FUERZA NEUVA" (MADRID 7901) AND A SPEECH THE SAME DAY BY
COUNCIL OF STATE PRESIDENT ORIOL Y URQUIJO WARNING ABOUT THE
DANGERS TO SPAIN'S INTEGRITY POSED BY POLITICAL PARTIES.
NON-EXTREMIST REGIME FIGURES AND DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION
FIGURES COINCIDE IN THE BELIEF THAT THE EXTREME LEFT AND
THE EXTREME RIGHT REINFORCE EACH OTHER AND, TAKEN
TOGETHER, POSE A THREAT TO PLURALIST EVOLUTION.
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